

The Light of a Firefly Forest

by TheLyricalSymphony

Category: Haikyu/ãf•ã,ãã,-ãf¥ãf¼

Language: English

Characters: Kei T., Shoyo H.

Status: Completed

Published: 2016-04-13 22:14:00

Updated: 2016-04-13 22:14:00

Packaged: 2016-04-27 17:31:57

Rating: K

Chapters: 1

Words: 4,135

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: For most summer break meant fun, excitement and a break from the monotony of school life. But for some it meant other things. For Hinata Shouyo it meant the burden of bittersweet memories of someone he longer for but was never meant to have. (A Haikyuu/Hotarubi no Mori e crossover)

The Light of a Firefly Forest

For most summer break meant fun, excitement and a break from the monotony of school life. But for some it meant other things. For Hinata Shouyo it meant the burden of bittersweet memories of someone he longer for but was never meant to have.

He wasn't much older than six when they first met. Like every summer before he was spending it with family in a mountain side village and one day decided to explore the nearby forest, despite the numerous warning he'd been told to heed. That the land of the forest wasn't meant for humans and that if he entered he would never leave. But what harm would come if he stayed on the path he thought. He'd be able to find his way out and no one would be the wiser to his adventure. Except that there was no exact path and soon panic started clawing at his senses when he realised he couldn't find his way out. He ran this way and that way, desperately searching for an exit, but with no luck. Tripping up over his own feet the boy toppled to the floor exhausted. Tears welled in his eyes and he started to sob, afraid and alone.

"How pathetic. Say Shrimpy, can you keep the noise down, some of us are trying to live in peace here."

The voice that caught Hinata's attention wasn't a kind one. Far from it. It was a voice filled with snark and disgust towards him but he didn't care. A voice meant another person, someone who could help him. His head shot up to find the owner of the voice, finally spotting a male leaning against a tree in a rather nonchalant fashion. He was tall and lean, wore a button down shirt with a

feather pattern up one side, a vest underneath, slacks and wooden sandals. But what was most interesting was their mask that sat on his face, half hiding short blonde locks. It was black with red detailing around the eyes and fashioned to look a crow. It reminded Hinata of the crows he'd watch at home, arguing over scraps of garbage. Pushing himself to his feet the boy dashed towards the stranger.

>"Another person! I'm saved, you have to-"before he could finish his sentence the stranger moved to the side and once again Hinata found his face in the dirt, scrapes stinging his skin.
"Did you parents never tell you not to talk to strangers Shrimpy? Then again, you don't look like the sort of child who actually pays attention to what his elders tell him."

>"I'm not a shrimp and I do pay attention to what I'm told. Most of the time." Hinata mumbled the last bit, hoping the other didn't hear him, sending him a glare.
"Then pay attention to this. Do not touch me." The glare morphed to a look of confusion.

>"Why am I not allowed to touch you?"
"You're human correct?" the boy nodded, "If a human touches me I'll disappear." Even more confused the redhead pushed himself to his feet. He stared at the other before walking towards him, arms held outstretch. With every step he took the stranger took one of his own, keeping himself just out of reach. Determined to catch him Hinata quickened his pace and just as he thought he had him something hard and solid fell on his head.

>"Gwah! Right in the diarrhoea pressure point!" He hadn't seen the other pick up a stick.
"You really are an idiot. If you touch me I'll disappear, obliterate, no longer exist. Do you get it now Shrimpy?" Hinata clutched his painful head, pouting towards the taller male.

>"You really aren't human are you? No human would hit a child that hard."
"Then what do you think I am?"

>"A meanie!" The stranger snorted, holding out the stick towards the still pouting child.
"Come one, I don't think the forest wants to hear your pathetic wailing anymore." Glancing between the stick and the male Hinata cautiously grasped hold of the offered end, a smile twitching at his lips. And so the two walked through the forest side by side.

>"If one of us were a girl this would be like a date."
"It would be a pretty crappy date. Don't know many people who view escorting a snotty nosed brat out of the forest they foolishly got themselves lost in as romantic." The shorter male stuck his tongue out at his companion before giggling.

>"You don't have many friends with that attitude do you?" The blonde didn't respond to the comment and Hinata could have sworn he saw him tense up. The stranger slowed his pace down the old worn stone steps as they neared the wooded archway that marked the entrance to the forest.
"Follow that path and you'll reach the village. Now scram, and if you get lost again I'm not helping you." Shaking the stick loose from the youngster's hand he turned to leave.

>"Excuse me, what's your name?" Hinata asked, grabbing hold of the stick again. Silence. "I'm Hinata, Hinata Shouyo. Thank you for leading me out of the forest. You'll be here again tomorrow right? I'll come back with a thank you present!" The smile on the boy's face reminded the other of the sun, warm and bright.
"You're not afraid?"

>"Of what?"
"This is the forest where the mountain god and spirits leave. Set foot within and you'll lose your way and be lost forever. That's what the villagers say right?" Hinata pondered on the words the other had said. Does that mean he wasn't human? Did he himself live in the forest? But he had to be human, he helped him.

>"If I'm with you then I won't get lost. Well, you see you tomorrow!" Letting of the stick he turned away and started to jog home.
"Kei. My name, it's Kei."
>Hinata could stop the grin that stretched from ear to ear, even when he finally reached home and was scolded for his actions and went to sleep with his mind filled with thoughts of the male in the crow mask.<p>

Neither had expected the other to show up the next day. Kei had thought the young boy would have been grounded by his parents for disobeying them. Hinata thought Kei simply would rather keep his distance. But there they both were at the wooden archway, a plastic bag in Hinata's hand and an oh so familiar stick in Kei's.

>"You came! I brought that thank you present." As Hinata opened his plastic bag wide the second male stood from the step he perched on stepping down to look inside at the contents.
"Meat buns and ice cream. A gross combination Pipsqueak." Regardless of his remark Kei still grabbed the strawberry ice cream from the top, opening it and placing the wrapper back in the bag.

>"Hey Kei, were you waiting for me?"
"I was going to see if you were going to be idiotic and try and get yourself lost again. Let's go somewhere cooler, this heat is going to kill me." The two walked up the steps and into the cool shade of the forest, Hinata cramming his meat bun in this mouth whilst the blonde ate his ice cream, mask pushed up his face, making it difficult to see. The younger stifled a giggle as Kei tripped over a small root arching up from the ground and kept his distance, weary of the stick that could come down on him at any moment.

>"You haven't ran at me yet, maybe you do have a brain up there after all." Hinata argued back and the two soon fell into conversation. But after some time something felt off to the younger male. He could feel eyes on his back but whenever he turned around nothing was there. Then out of the corner of his eye he saw something that he could only describe as a large black blob form behind a tree with a widening smirk. A scared eek left his lips and he moved to hide behind the taller male.
"Oya oya, that's a human right? You should give him to me Kei and let me eat him."

>"Or we could simply ignore you and you could actually do something with your life instead of trying to scare idiots like Pipsqueak here." Said 'pipsqueak' couldn't stop his indignant squawk at the comment.
"Oi human, if you touch Kei and he disappears I'll have no choice but to eat yo-"the blob's sentence finished with a shriek as Kei sneezed, reverting to its original form and running deep into the forest.

>"Ah, was that a real Kitsune? Wow, I saw a real spirit! Kei, did you see, did you see?" Said male mumbled to himself as Hinata chattered away excitedly.
"What do you think I am if you think that scaredy cat is a real spirit?"

>"A meanie!"<p>

When the sun had started to set Kei once again led the other out of the forest and soon the two fell into a routine, meeting at the archway and spending the day in the forest, exploring, playing, talking. But all good things must come to an end and summer was drawing to a close. It was Hinata's penultimate day in the village for that year. Kei had asked if something was wrong but the boy said was fine. They decided to spend the day hanging around the river covered in lilies, Kei dangling his feet in the cool water whilst the other chased frogs and numerous insects.

>"Kei look at this giant frog I found!" Running over to the blonde

Hinata found him asleep, or presumably asleep. Carefully letting the frog go he inched closer to the other. It's okay if I touch his mask right? Fingertips delicately brushed against the mask's surface, waiting for any change before carefully moving it away off the male's face. Kei looked like any other human. His lashes brushed the tops of his cheeks and the boy was surprised to see that he wore glasses under the mask. As he studied his features eyes fluttered open, revealing gold irises and a smirk grow on Kei's lips. Startled that he had been found out he slammed the mask back down, trying to ignore the rising flush on his cheeks.

>"Ow, to assault someone in their sleep, I thought you were better than that Hinata." Said male didn't say anything, focusing his attention on the grass below him. "I didn't look any different than a regular human did I?"
"Why do you wear a mask?" Hinata's voice was quieter than normal.

>"So then you don't think of me as human."
"You're weird."

>"You're gross." Deciding it was time to go home Hinata stood up, dusting blades of grass he'd pulled up off his shorts and legs and asked Kei to lead him out like always. An uncomfortable silence settled between the two. Grabbing a random stick Kei gently poked at Hinata's hand.
"You're going home tomorrow right?" All he got was a nod. Another poke with the stick. "But you're coming back next year right?" Another nod and another poke. "Then there's no reason for you to feel down is there Short-stock. Don't over think things, or that brain of yours will combust." Once again he poked at the other's hand who finally got the hint and held the end. The younger chuckled and a small smile tugged at his lips. Behind his mask Kei smiled too. They soon came to the old archway and parted ways, wishing for the next summer to come by quickly.

And so every summer there after Hinata would return to the village and spend time with Kei. They frequented the river often and explored the depths of the forest. Every so often they'd be have another encounter with a spirit similar to that with the Kitsune and every time Hinata would promise never to lay a finger on Kei. But sometimes that promise was harder to keep than he once thought.

Running ahead of the other Hinata clambered up a tree and shuffled across a branch, waiting for his unsuspecting victim. As the blonde approached he swung down.

>"What are you doing?"
"Aww it didn't work. I was trying to scare you."

>"And why were you trying to scare me?"
"To see what face you'd make." There was a moment of silence.

>"Hinata I'm wearing a mask." Before the redhead could comment the creaking and snapping of wood could be heard and the branch gave way. "Shouyo!" Eyes widened with fear as the other came closer, his arms stretched out ready to catch him. Don't Kei, stop! Hinata fell into a bush with a groan, Kei standing nearby arms withdrawn from their previous position.

>"Hinata are you all right?" The boy pulled himself out, groaning before saying he was fine. Curling in on himself Hinata looked up at Kei.
"Hey Kei," the blonde looked down at the younger, his heart clenching at the sight of unshed tears gather at the corners of soft brown eyes and he knelt down on the floor, shuffling over as close as he could be. "Promise never to touch me, okay?" And with that the tears fell and Hinata cried from the pain in his body and the pain of never being able to so much as interlock pinkies with his friend. The feeling in Kei's heart worsened and an itch burned into his fingers,

desperate to ruffle ginger locks and wipe those tears away. He moved his hand towards the other before pulling it back. Hinata felt a poking at his hand and instantly grabbed at the stick. The only source of comfort the two could say in moments like these.

Their days continued as normal after that incident, although the need to touch the other grew in both of them. Soon Hinata was in middle school and had joined the volleyball team, bringing his new strip to show off to Kei.

>"I would say you're starting to look like a man but you don't look like you've grown since you were crying on the floor like a baby."
>"I'm nearly 160 centimetres thank you very much. And you can talk, you've had grown since we first met." Hinata knew why the other grew at a much slower rate than he did but he still hung on his mind. At some point he'd be older than him. At some point he might stop coming every summer. At some point they'd have their finally meeting. Other thoughts of Kei filled his mind when he was away. Was the other lonely when he was gone, did he actually have any other friends? Did he yearn for Hinata's company the same way he yearned for Kei's?

>"What's winter like here?"
>"Bitterly cold."

>"Matches your personality then." The next day Hinata brought along a scarf and gave it to the taller male, getting him to promise to use it, to stay warm and safe over winter. He didn't know whether he used it or not but he liked to think he did. Liked to imagine the other snuggling his face into the warmth it provided, baby blue contrasting against blonde hair and golden eyes. Liked to imagine that he cherished the scarf because it came from him.

Middle school changed to high school and Hinata wore a new volleyball strip from a team consisting of new friends. But nothing replaced his thoughts for Kei. Thoughts that over the years grew from admiration to something akin to what his mother once told him was love when he was still a child. He knew it was stupid, to fall for someone like Kei but you couldn't help it. He wanted to see winter with the other, curled up in blankets in front of a fire with soothing hot drinks, watching the snow fall. He wanted to witness spring together, to watch the blossoms bloom and fall, petals scattering across the grass, a few in blonde and ginger curls. He wanted to experience autumn with him, see the leaves change colour, having competitions about who could step on the most crunchy leaves. He wanted to live life with Kei. He longed for Kei. He couldn't stop falling in love, didn't want to stop. And god did it hurt.

>"I'm thinking of getting a job here once I'm finished with school." He'd said one day, his feet sloshing in river water, a finished ice cream stick in one hand.
>"I thought you wanted to be on the national team and try and finally beat that King you keep complaining about."

>"Don't call him that, I can feel him scolding me even now. And I can do both."
>"Shouyo, what is this about?" Hinata didn't remember when the other had started calling him by his given name but he loved how it sounded from his lips, nearly addicted to the sound.

>"I missed you. Over autumn and winter and spring, all I could think about was how I wanted to be at your side. I wanted to be here, with you." Kei was silent for a bit, removing his mask and placing it on the ground, in between them. Hinata didn't remember when he'd started doing that either, taking his mask off and putting it between them, an invitation for Hinata to hide his fears and insecurities behind it, away from the other's prying eyes, if needed. Butterflies fluttered in his gut at the thought of Kei being so in tune with him.

Finally after some time he spoke.
"I never told you about myself properly did I? When I was born my parents left me in the forest. Who knew why. Maybe I was a mistake, maybe they simply couldn't look after me. Either way they left me here to die. The mountain god took pity I guess and made it so I could live with the spirits. But bodies maintained by magic are weak.

>"There was another like me. He was the closest thing I had to a friend. He was abandoned at the same time and we grew up together. One day a child got lost I guess and Tadashi helped them out. I didn't see him after that." Golden eyes glistened with tears but Hinata said nothing, knew that wasn't his place in the moment.
"This body is nothing more than a ghost, a shadow. A pathetic mockery that can shatter in an instant due to a single touch. You shouldn't spend your life chasing shadows." The usual sign of comfort was back, the end of a stick carefully sliding into Kei's hand, Hinata on the other end. Something to bridge the distance between them, to ground them together.

>"Something that fades at a single touch. Doesn't that remind you of snow Kei?" Silence.
"It's okay to forget about me Shouyo."

>But Hinata would never be able to forget Kei. And his gut started sinking at the feeling that this might be their last summer.<p>

They were practising receives when Kei asks if he wants to go the annual spirit festival. The redhead remembers hearing stories about it from the villagers, a festival that replicated those he normally frequented in his local neighbourhood back home.

>"I won't get eaten by that old Kitsune will I?" Hinata joked, loving the throaty chuckle the other made.
"I'll make sure to protect you Chibi and that no one steps on you."

>"I'm not that short! Jeez, and here I was wanting to hug you for being so nice."
"Do it." Hinata couldn't conceal the look of shock and horror at Kei's words, the sinking feeling from before returning. "I'll meet you at 8 at the normal spot tonight."

>That night the stick that normally connected the two become a white cloth loosely tied to their wrists. Hinata couldn't deny that he had a wonderful time at the festival, trying to catch goldfish, looking at masks, trying to guess the spirits from feature left unhidden from the human disguises they donned. But nervousness settled at the bottom of his stomach and was getting stronger with each passing minute as the night slowed to a close and with Kei so close and yet so so far away the boy couldn't think straight.
"If one of us was a girl this would be like a date." He joked, trying to cheer himself up.

>"It is a date." Hinata's breath hitched in his throat.
"This isn't enough anymore Kei. I know it's selfish but I want you with me all the time. I want to hold you and run my fingers through your hair and kiss you andë" He had to stop himself, refused to break down, refused to ruin this near perfect night. A mask covered his face and he heard a soft kissing sound, the other pulling back with the faintest of blushes topping his cheeks.

>"I know Shouyo, I know."
Kei really did look gorgeous without his mask, the lights from the lanterns making him look like he was glowing, making him look inhuman. To Hinata he looked like home.

The festival drew to a close and the two walked their normal route home to the edge of the forest, hands twitching with a burning need to interlock.

>"I never normally go to the festival, occasionally other humans sneak in and it's not worth the risk. But I'd been wanting to bring you for a while now. I'm glad I was finally able to show

you."
"You sound like you're going to die tomorrow." Hinata's voice wavered and he was grateful for the mask hiding unshed tears from the blonde. A gentle smile graced Kei's lips and sharp eyes softened.

"You should keep the mask, it suits you." As they continued walking two children ran past, the second bumping into Kei and nearly tripping before said male caught him.
"Thanks mister. Oi Trashykawa wait up!" The boy ran off before either could as if he was okay. Watching the two leave a strange blue glow entered Hinata's peripheries. His breathing stopped.

"K-kei" This wasn't happening. The glow brightened as Kei's hand started to disappear. "He was a human." He watched as the light continued up the other's arm, another glow starting at the ends of the fingers on his other hand. Kei stepped forward, removed the mask from the younger's face and tossed it to the side before bowing down to place his lips on Hinata's. Said male raised his hands to the blonde's face, one continuing onto the blonde locks, threading his fingers through the strands, trying to commit all the sensations to his memory. The kiss was sweet and chaste and when they pulled apart both had tears streaming down their cheeks. Hinata buried his face in the other's chest, clutching at the shirt fabric desperately, begging, pleading for him to stay, that it wasn't fair, that he can't go and leave him now. This isn't what he wanted, isn't what either of them wanted so why did it have to happen?
"Say Shouyo, I think I'm in love with you." Kei's voice was faint and the redhead just managed to catch the soft smile and eyes filled with adoration before he was gone. Tumbling to the floor he grasped at the shirt left in his hands and cried like he's never cried before.

Hinata didn't know when he finished or how long he's been there but once no more tears could fall he got up, taking hold of the mask long forgotten in the grass and bringing it to his face, leaving a butterfly kiss on the beak.

"I think I love you too Kei." Leaving the clothes behind he turned and left, his heart hollow and aching as a shaky smile trembled on his lips.

"It's been a while hasn't it Kei? I made it onto the national team. I'm still in a set with Kageyama but I'm okay with that. His tosses honestly are the best. It's not the same without you here. The forest seems lifeless now. That old Kitsune misses you. Still hasn't eaten me yet so I suppose we're good.

"Remember when we first met and you said "set foot within and you'll lose your way and be lost forever"? I think I finally understand what you meant. The past few years without you I've been lost. But that's okay. I have someone to help me out. I think I'm going to be alright." A small firefly landed on the male's cheek, tickling the skin, wings like a brush of lips.

"Oi dumbass, you coming or what?"
"Keep the noise down Tobio. I'm sure the forest doesn't want to hear your wailing."

Yeah, I'm going to be okay.

End
file.